



Florida House of Representatives

Eric Eisnaugle

Representative, District 40

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EISNAUGLE'S TRANSPARENCY IN PRIVATE ATTORNEY CONTRACTING LEGISLATION PASSES FLORIDA HOUSE

TALLAHASSEE – Legislation ensuring accountability, transparency and good stewardship of taxpayer money when the Attorney General contracts with private attorneys was approved by the Florida House yesterday. House Bill (HB) 215, sponsored by Representative Eric Eisnaugle (R-Orlando), maximizes taxpayer dollars by providing a reasonable limit of \$50 million on attorney fees when the Attorney General hires private attorneys on a contingency fee basis.

"Floridians deserve confidence that any and all contracts that the Attorney General makes with private attorneys are in the public's best interest and that any private attorneys hired by the Attorney General work only for their clients, the people of Florida, and not the other way around" said Representative Eisnaugle. "This common-sense legislation has been called 'Sunshine for Lawyers' for a good reason – it shines the light of public scrutiny on how taxpayers' money is spent."

Florida's Attorney General has the power to hire private attorneys to sue on behalf of Floridians, who are compensated based on a contingency fee agreement made between the private attorney and the Department of Legal Affairs. HB 215 requires the Attorney General to make a written determination that the contingency fee earned by private attorneys is both cost-effective and in the public interest and requires these services be competitively procured. This legislation also increases transparency in the contracting process by requiring the Attorney General to post contracts, written determinations, and payments online within a specific timeframe.

The Senate companion to HB 215 is Senate Bill 1370, sponsored by Senator Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey). This legislation is a priority for Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum.

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